

**PSYC 431**
**Current Issues in Psychopathology**
**Spring 2021**
**Instructor:** Kristin Russell, PhD, R.Psych.

**Lecture Location:** Online/D2L/Zoom lectures

**Email:** krchampa@ucalgary.ca

**Lecture day/time:** Hybrid, TR; 17:00- 19:45

**Office Hours:** Please contact to set up a  
Zoom meeting

### Course Description

This course will provide an overview of current issues in the assessment, etiology, and treatment of psychopathology. Examples of issues to be covered include the legitimacy of sex addiction, forced treatment of mentally ill individuals, the harms of pornography, addictions, the need for psychiatrists, sentencing youth as adults, and others. The format of the course will include lectures and debate-style presentations. Students who complete the course will gain a broad understanding of the current controversial topics in psychopathology, develop critical thinking skills, and gain experience in consuming and critically evaluating psychology research literature, forming balanced and informed perspectives on controversial issues, and engagement with student peers in debate regarding these issues.

### Course Learning Outcomes

The Department of Psychology is committed to student knowledge and skill development. The table below lists the key learning outcomes for this course, the program-learning outcomes they facilitate (see [psyc.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate/program-learning-outcomes](http://psyc.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate/program-learning-outcomes)), and the expected level of achievement.

Course Learning Outcomes	Assessment Methods	PLO(s)	Level(s)
Evaluate journal articles and debate current controversial issues in the field of Psychology	Debate presentation, exams	1, 4, 5, 7	A
Recognize different perspectives that can be applied to ethical dilemmas and controversial issues	Debate presentation, exams	2, 5, 6	C, A
Demonstrate accountability and integrity in professional and peer relationships	Class participation and discussion, debate presentation	4	C, A
Assess and critically evaluate information, ideas, assumptions comprehensively and from a variety of perspectives	Debate presentation, position paper, exams	1,2,4,5,7	C, A
Use relevant sources of scientific knowledge to identify, frame, and generate novel solutions to problems or issues	Debate presentation, position paper	1,2,5,7	A
Give a presentation to increase knowledge, develop understanding, and impact the target audience	Debate presentation	1,2,4,5	C, A
Write a term paper that demonstrates critical thinking and application of psychological knowledge while establishing a position on a controversial topic in Psychology	Written assignment	1,4,5	A
Articulate and explain key messages and concepts clearly and credibly	Debate presentation, written assignment, class discussion, exams	4	C, A

Notes. PLOs = Program-Learning Outcomes: 1 = demonstrate knowledge of psychological sciences, 2 = think critically and solve problems, 3 = conduct research and analyze data, 4 = communicate effectively, 5 = demonstrate information literacy, 6 = understand and implement ethical principles in a diverse world, 7 = apply psychological knowledge and skills, 8 = Demonstrate multicultural competence and awareness of issues related to equity, diversity,\* and inclusion. Level of PLO achievement facilitated by this course: I = introductory, C = competency, A = advanced.

### **Acknowledgments and Respect for Diversity**

Our classrooms view diversity of identity as a strength and resource. Your experiences and different perspectives are encouraged and add to a rich learning environment that fosters critical thought through respectful discussion and inclusion. The Department of Psychology would also like to acknowledge the traditional territories of the people of the Treaty 7 region in southern Alberta. The City of Calgary is also home to Métis Nation of Alberta, Region III.

### **Course Format**

This course will use a hybrid format. Most lectures will be delivered live via Zoom during each scheduled class. *Note: Given that participation is an important component of this debate style course and attendance is expected during synchronous classes, the lectures will not be recorded and posted to D2L. The lecture powerpoint will be posted to D2L.* Other class materials will be posted to the course D2L page by the day/time of each scheduled class as per the course schedule.

There will be two asynchronous classes, as marked by asterisks in the course schedule below. For these two dates, class materials will be posted to the course D2L page by the day/time of each scheduled class as per the course schedule below.

Note: All information regarding the course, exams, and assignments will be posted on D2L and students should be diligent in keeping up to date with the information to ensure course requirements are met and to keep apprised of any changes or updates to the course information.

### **Prerequisites**

PSYC 300/301 or 312 -Experimental Design and Quantitative Methods for Psychology  
 PSYC 385 -Abnormal Psychology

### **Required Text**

Halgin, R. P. (2018). *Taking sides: Clashing views in abnormal psychology* (9th edition). McGraw Hill, Iowa. The text is available for purchase through the University of Calgary bookstore. **Note:** Previous editions of the text are not suitable for the course because the examined issues differ from the current edition.

### **Assessment Methods: Detailed description of each component below**

<b>Component</b>	<b>% of grade</b>	<b>Date</b>
<i>Participation</i>	10	-Throughout course
<i>Presentation</i>	30	-Group decision on topic due May 13, 2021 -Presentation date TBD for each group
<i>Term Paper</i>	30	-Outline due: May 20, 2021 -Paper due: June 17, 2021
<i>Midterm Exam</i>	15	-May 27, 2021
<i>Final Exam</i>	15	-Set by Registrar

**Class participation:** The criteria for class participation will be further delineated in the grading criteria that will be posted to D2L. In general, evaluation of participation will be based on quality of contributions and overall level of engagement in the course, understanding of course material, and level of critical thinking evident in contributions. This course involves active debate and discussion of the presented topics (both instructor lectures and student presentations), and requires student input and contribution to class discussion. As such, this involves a few different components:

- It is expected that students will prepare for and participate in class discussion. Effective participation involves both quality and quantity of responses. Quantity does not make up for lack of quality. You will be evaluated on the quality of your contributions in class as demonstrated, in part, by knowledge of the readings for that week and your thoughtful analysis of the readings. You are required to come to class having completed and thought about the readings for that week.
- Although delivered via Zoom, this class aims to foster participation and cohesion which is not readily attained unless participants are visible and audible to others, especially when class discussion is occurring. Please have your cameras on during class discussion as active participation needs to involve speaking versus typing into the chat box.

**Debate group presentations:** Groups of 4 students will work together to identify a topic of interest from the textbook, with teams of 2 group members each taking one side of the chosen issue.

- **Rationale:** Presentations at 400-level psychology courses are common. The experience can help to prepare you for future oral reports, whether for graduate school, professional school, or employment settings. Some of the material in Psychology 431 lends itself to a debate-style presentation. The textbook is organized in a pro/con format. For every topic in the text, there is compelling evidence on both sides of the issue. There is no right or wrong answer to each issue. Rather, the debates provide the opportunity to review evidence in detail (i.e., sort out opinion/myth from fact), and promote discussion and critical evaluation of the issue.
- The purpose of the debates is to allow you to practice considering multiple sides of an issue, critically consume the information, formulate sound arguments, and discuss controversial issues in a respectful and well-informed manner.
- **Choosing a partner/topic/position/date:** You will find a debate team during the first weeks of class. The possible topic areas will be listed on D2L in a discussion board with four sign up spots.
  - Once your 4 spots are filled, group members should communicate regarding date preferences and alternate topics/dates. Each group then needs to indicate your group members, topic, and date preferences by emailing the instructor by **May 13, 2021, 11:59pm** at the latest. Please have one group member email on behalf of the team with all team members included in the email by cc'ing them. Include the following in your email:
    1. First choice topic
    2. First and last names of the 2 team members forming the 'Yes' side
    3. First and last names of the 2 team members forming the 'No' side
    4. First, second, and third choice preferences for your debate date (June 1,3,8,10,15)
    5. Two back up topics you would be interested in, in case multiple teams request the same topic

*Note: If the desired textbook topic is not seen on the sign-up list and a group of four people determine they would prefer one of the unlisted topics, they can make this request to the instructor.*

- The instructor will try to assign groups their preferred topics, positions, and dates, but cannot guarantee that preferred choices will be obtained. If you do not indicate your preferences by May 13, your team, topic, and date will be chosen for you.
- **Format:** Two students will debate two other students on a contentious issue selected from the textbook. You should further research and supplement your topic area by reviewing and including literature beyond the information included in the textbook.
- 20 minutes is allotted for each sides' presentation and approximately 5-10 minutes for each team's rebuttal. The order of speakers will be 1) Yes side – main presentation; 2) No side – main presentation; 3) Yes side – rebuttal; 4) No side – rebuttal; 5) Class discussion.
  - During the rebuttal, choose *two major points* the other side presented and attempt to dispute them with your evidence or arguments. Your rebuttals should be based on logic, and opposing data, not just on opinion that is not based on evidence. During the class discussion, questions from the class can be directed at one or both presenters.
  - Your presentation should be delivered via PowerPoint. You should provide background on the topic selected regarding how it pertains to your side of the issue. The debates are intended to be enjoyable, so feel free to use brief activities, cartoons, demonstrations, etc. as support material (but not as the bulk of the presentation). However, it is important to keep presentations professional.
  - Your presentation slides should be submitted to the dropbox by 10:00pm the day before your debate. Either group member can submit for your team.
  - Read through the information regarding public speaking and group work posted on D2L and let the instructor know if there are any questions or concerns. Be sure to speak to the instructor as early as possible if there are problems with the group that cannot be resolved.
- Missed presentations, **without instructor approval**, will be assigned a grade of 0%.

**Term Paper:** This term paper is an independent assignment and will explore an aspect of one of the textbook debates/controversial topics. Students cannot use the same topic that was used for their debate. **This paper is not meant to re-iterate the information presented in the textbook**, but to expand upon an aspect of the debate further than that presented in the textbook and discuss the current state of the literature. This would involve examining the current literature (2010 and newer) in the specific area you decide to explore.

- As part of the term paper assignment, a brief outline of your topic should be submitted to the instructor in the designated D2L dropbox by **May 20, 2021, 11:59pm**, sooner if you wish. The outline should briefly indicate the specific area of debate or controversy with the topic/s you plan to address in the paper. You should also include at least 5 references you plan to use when writing your paper. The purpose of the proposal is to organize your thoughts and receive feedback before writing the paper. This proposal will not be graded, but is required.

As such, 5% will be deducted from the overall paper grade if the proposal is not submitted. If you subsequently decide to change the topic of your paper, the change must be approved through submission of a new outline.

- This paper is to be between 12-15 pages in length, excluding the reference section, and must be written in APA format (typed, double spaced, 12 point font, 1" margins).
- More specific details regarding paper grading/expectations will be discussed during the first class and posted on D2L along with a grading rubric. In general, papers will be graded based on appropriate length, adherence to topic/assignment requirements, summarization of topic area and integration of the reviewed/cited literature, grammar, spelling, punctuation, sentence construction, and adherence to APA formatting. Details and a sample APA style paper are provided here: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/18/>
- This paper is due **June 17, 2021** to the designated dropbox by 11:59pm. Late term papers will be accepted with a 10% penalty per day, including weekends. Without instructor approval, assignments more than 4 days late will no longer be accepted.
- **\*\*Please note: Student collaboration is not allowed on this assignment.**

**Midterm and Final Exams:** Exams will be administered via the Quizzes section on D2L. Each exam will be 90 minutes in duration, with an additional 45 minutes allotted to accommodate any technology issues that may arise, for a total of 135 minutes. Students will be able to write the exam during a 135-minute timeframe of their choosing within the 24-hour period of the specified exam day.

- These exams will consist of multiple choice and short answer response questions and will be non-cumulative (the final exam will cover material presented only after the midterm exam). The exams will cover lecture material presented by the instructor, as well as all assigned readings (text and articles), and the chapters and readings that correspond to the topics selected for each debate.
- Exams in this course are open book. For this course, an open book exam means that the use of class notes and the textbook is permitted. **The use of online resources is prohibited. Students may/may not communicate with others about course material or the exam either in person or electronically during the entirety of the exam administration period.** Exams not completed on the specified date, and with no contact of the instructor within 24 hours following the exam, will be assigned a grade of 0. Students with academic accommodations should contact the instructor to make appropriate adjustments to the allotted times for exam completion.

### **University of Calgary Academic Integrity Policy**

Academic integrity is the foundation of the development and acquisition of knowledge and is based on values of honesty, trust, responsibility, and respect. We expect members of our community to act with integrity.

Research integrity, ethics, and principles of conduct are key to academic integrity. Members of our campus community are required to abide by our institutional code of conduct and promote academic integrity in upholding the University of Calgary's reputation of excellence. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have read and are familiar with the student academic misconduct policy: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-academic-misconduct-policy.pdf>.

### Department of Psychology Criteria for Letter Grades

Psychology professors use the following criteria when assigning letter grades:

**A+ grade: *Exceptional Performance.*** An A+ grade indicates near perfect performance on multiple choice and short answer exams. For research papers/essays/course projects/presentations, an A+ grade is awarded for exceptional work deserving of special recognition and is therefore not a common grade.

**A, A- Range: *Excellent Performance.*** Superior understanding of course material. Written work is very strong in terms of critical and original thinking, content, organization, and the expression of ideas, and demonstrates student's thorough knowledge of subject matter.

**B Range: *Good Performance.*** Above average understanding of course material. Written work shows evidence of critical thinking and attention to organization and editing but could be improved in form and/or content.

**C Range: *Satisfactory Performance.*** Adequate understanding of course material. Knowledge of basic concepts and terminology is demonstrated. Written work is satisfactory and meets essential requirements but could be improved significantly in form and content. Note: All prerequisites for courses offered by the Faculty of Arts must be met with a minimum grade of C-.

**D range: *Marginally meets standards.*** Minimal understanding of subject matter. Written work is marginally acceptable and meets basic requirements but requires substantial improvements in form and content. Student has not mastered course material at a level sufficient for advancement into more senior courses in the same or related subjects.

**F grade: *Course standards not met.*** Inadequate understanding of subject matter. Written work does not meet basic requirements. Student has not demonstrated knowledge of course material at a level sufficient for course credit.

### Grading Scale

A+	96-100%	B+	80-84%	C+	67-71%	D+	54-58%
A	90-95%	B	76-79%	C	63-66%	D	50-53%
A-	85-89%	B-	72-75%	C-	59-62%	F	0-49%

As stated in the University Calendar, it is at the instructor's discretion to round off either upward or downward to determine a final grade when the average of term work and final examinations is between two letter grades. To determine final letter grades, final percentage grades will be rounded up or down

to the nearest whole percentage (e.g., 89.5% will be rounded up to 90% = A but 89.4% will be rounded down to 89% = A-).

\*\*Please note- grades will not be adjusted based on how close one is to the next letter grade or other reasons (e.g., scholarship funding, future academic plans, performance in other courses).

### Tentative Lecture Schedule

Date	Topic/Activity/Readings/Due Date
W May 5	Spring term lectures begin.
R May 6	Synchronous: Introduction class
T May 11	*Asynchronous: Do we still need psychiatrists? Unit 2.1 Halgin <i>Last day to drop classes without penalty and last day to add or swap classes.</i>
R May 13	Synchronous: Is the addiction model appropriate for treating compulsive sexual behaviors? Unit 1.1. Halgin <b>Submission of group topics/preferred dates due</b>
T May 18	*Asynchronous: Is the forced treatment of seriously mentally ill individuals justified? Unit 3.5 Halgin
R May 20	Synchronous: Should youth who have committed a serious crime be sentenced as an adult? Reading posted to D2L- Controversies: Should adolescents be tried as adults? <b>Outline of term paper topic due</b>
T May 25	Synchronous: Are trigger warnings destructive in college classrooms? Unit 3.3 Halgin
R May 27	<b>Midterm</b>
T Jun 1	Synchronous: Debate groups 1, 2
R Jun 3	Synchronous: Debate groups 3, 4
T June 8	Synchronous: Debate groups 5, 6
R June 10	Synchronous: Debate groups 7, 8
T June 15	Synchronous: Debate groups 9, 10
R June 17	Synchronous lecture or Debate presentation completion if needed- <b>TBD</b> <b>Term paper due to dropbox by 11:59pm</b> <i>End of Spring Lectures and last day to withdraw from a course.</i>
M June 21	Start of Spring Final Exams <b>Final exam TBD by registrar</b>
W June 23	End of Spring Final Exams

**Please note:**

\*There will be readings from the textbook associated with the debates, TBD once topics are finalized and will be posted accordingly

\*\*Some changes in the course outline may occur and some lectures may shift dates dependent on class size changes and finalized debates. Any changes will be communicated to the class during class time and posted on D2L. Students will be responsible for keeping up to date with any changes.

## Course Credits for Research Participation

### Extra Research Participation Course Credit is Not Offered for this Course.

#### Absence From A Test/Exam

Makeup tests/exams are **NOT** an option without the approval of the instructor. A student may be asked to provide supporting documentation for an exemption/special request for a make-up exam <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html> . Students who miss a test/exam have up to 24 hours to contact the instructor to ask for a makeup test/exam. It's the instructor's discretion if they will allow a make-up exam. Students who do not schedule a makeup test/exam with the instructor within this 24-hour period forfeit the right to a makeup test/exam. At the instructor's discretion, a makeup test/exam may differ significantly (in form and/or content) from a regularly scheduled test/exam. **Once approved by the instructor a makeup test/exam must be written within 1 week of the missed test/exam during exam make-up hours provided by the department** <http://psychology.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate/exam-and-course-information#mues>. If a student cannot write their final exam on the date assigned by the Registrar's Office, they need to apply for a deferred exam <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/exams/deferred-exams>.

#### Travel During Exams

Consistent with University regulations, students are expected to be available to write scheduled exams at any time during the official June and August examination periods. Requests to write a make-up exam because of conflicting travel plans (e.g., flight bookings) will NOT be considered by the department. Students are advised to wait until the final examination schedule is posted before making any travel arrangements. **If a student cannot write their final exam on the date assigned by the Registrar's Office, they need to apply for a deferred exam** <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/exams/deferred-exams>. **Students with an exceptional extenuating circumstance (e.g., a family emergency) should contact the Department of Psychology (psyugrd@ucalgary.ca).**

**Reappraisal of Graded Term Work** <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i-2.html>

**Reappraisal of Final Grade** <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i-3.html>

#### Academic Accommodations

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit [www.ucalgary.ca/access/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/). Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>.



### **Academic Misconduct**

For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the University of Calgary Calendar at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

### **Instructor Intellectual Property**

Course materials created by professor(s) (including course outlines, presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the professor(s). These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the professor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

### **Copyright Legislation**

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright ([www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf](http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf)) and requirements of the copyright act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

### **Freedom OF Information and Protection of Privacy**

Student information will be collected in accordance with typical (or usual) classroom practice. Students' assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty. Private information related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard by the faculty at the University of Calgary

### **Student Support and Resources**

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines>

### **Important Dates**

The last day to drop this course with no "W" notation and **still receive a tuition fee refund is Tuesday, May 11, 2021**. Last day for registration/change of registration is **Tuesday, May 11, 2021**. The last day to withdraw from this course is **Thursday, June 17, 2021**.